

MARKED-UP VERSION OF AMENDED
SPECIFICATION PARAGRAPHS

Page 2, second full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:

In an attempt to ameliorate such a situation, various oxygen tank carrying systems have been developed. For example, U.S. Patent No, 6,003,7[0]44 to Culjak is directed to a lumbar supported carrier for oxygen tanks including a main belt portion and a pouch for the tank. The belt has a shoulder strap for stabilizing the belt and tank extending over the shoulder and diagonally across the body. The shoulder strap comes with a series of smaller straps for securing the hose or cannula that is used in connection with the tank. The pouch is attachable to the belt by means of straps and has a drawstring with cord lock for securing the tank within the pouch. In addition, the pouch has separate D rings that allow the pouch to be attached to the shoulder strap and used separately from the belt. The belt has a padded portion to fit the curve of the lumbar area of the human spine.

Page 3, first full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:

An example of a “backpack” oxygen carrying system designed for mountaineering is shown in U.S. Patent No. 5,400,934 to Ducros, in which a rucksack, or backpack₁, is adapted to make it possible to drink[,] or inhale oxygen[,] whil[st]e walking. The rucksack includes two straps wherein at least one of its two straps defines a protective, isothermic inner space, for example₂, by means of a foldable protective band [which] that is sewn on the upper half of the strap. A recipient is placed in the rucksack₁, and its tube passes in this protective space and finally terminates in a valve for drinking or inhaling.

Page 5, third full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:

The tank 12 is contained in a tank-holding assembly 14. The tank-holding assembly 14 is configured as a pouch 15 dimensioned to fit the tank 12, and can include additional features to accommodate accessories or guide tubes or cannulae for use with the tank 12. Although illustrated as a pouch 15, it is contemplated that the tank-holding assembly 14 can be provided as a rigid or semi-rigid housing surrounding a source of therapeutic fluid[, or even as “ears” secured to opposite sides of an outer tank]. In FIG. 1, a pocket 16 is provided to hold cannulae, masks, and the like. The pouch 14 can be fabricated from any suitable material. Such pouches are conventionally constructed from a fabric such as nylon, but it is contemplated that a pouch fabricated from a material such as neoprene would be advantageous.

Page 6, first full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:

A shoulder strap assembly 18 is attached to the pouch 14⁵. The strap assembly 18 is configured to flex during movement of a human carrier of the tank assembly 10 to such a degree that the perceived weight of the tank 12 is lessened. Examples of suitable straps can be seen in U.S. Patent Nos. 5,143,266 and 4,924,557 and 4,827,578 to Heckerman, [and] U.S. Patent No. 4,976,388 to Coontz, and U.S. Patent No. 5,695,102 to Jackson, the specifications of which are incorporated by reference herein. It is to be understood that the strap 18 is merely illustrative, and that any strap meeting the requirements of the present invention can be employed.

Page 6, second full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:

The strap assembly 18 is constructed as a multi-element strap having a flexible section 20 flanked by a pair of structural sections 22, 24. In the illustrated example, the structural sections 22, 24 are fabricated from a material that has less ["give" than] or no elasticity in comparison to the material from which the flexible section 20 is made.

Page 6, third full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:

The first structural section 2[4]2 has a first end 26 secured to the tank pouch 14 and a second end 28 secured to the flexible section 20. The second structural section 2[2]4 has a first end 30 secured to the tank pouch 14 and a second end 32 secured to the flexible section 20.

Page 6, fourth full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:

As shown in FIG. 2, the flexible section 20 includes a flexible element 34 and an adjustably structural element 36 secured to the flexible element 34. The structural element 36 is longer than the flexible element 34, and is secured in overlaying relation to the flexible element 34. The flexible element can be configured from a suitable flexible material such as neoprene, and the structural element can be fabricated from a material such as [cordura nylon] woven elastic.

Page 7, first full paragraph, replace with the following new paragraph:

In FIG. 1, the strap assembly 18 is attached to the pouch 14 via [spring clips] snap hooks and triangle rings 38. It is contemplated that the strap 18 can be secured by any suitable mechanism. For example, FIG. 3 shows a strap 40

secured to a pouch 42 via [parachute buckles] quick disconnect buckles 44, and

FIG. 5 shows a strap 46 sewn directly to a pouch 48.

MARKED-UP VERSION OF AMENDED CLAIMS

2. (Amended) A tank assembly according to claim 1, wherein [the] at least one strap comprises a multi-element strap.

3. (Amended) A tank assembly according to claim 2, wherein the strap further comprises the following:

a flexible section; [and]

a first structural section having a first end secured to the tank pouch and a second end secured to the flexible section; and

a second structural section having a first end secured to the tank pouch and a second end secured to the flexible section;

whereby the structural sections are fabricated from a material that has less [“give” than] or no elasticity in comparison to the material from which the flexible section is made.

10. (Amended) A medical fluid assembly according to claim 9, wherein the strap further comprises the following:

a flexible section; [and]

a first structural section having a first end secured to the source-holding assembly and a second end secured to the flexible section; and

a second structural section having a first end secured to the source-holding assembly and a second end secured to the flexible section;

whereby the structural sections are fabricated from a material that has less [“give” than] or no elasticity in comparison to the material from which the flexible section is made.

17. (Amended) A method according to claim 16, wherein the step of providing a strap further comprises the following:

providing a flexible section;

securing a first end of a first structural section to the tank-holding assembly;

securing a second end of a first structural section to the flexible section;

securing a first end of a second structural section to the tank-holding assembly;

and

securing a second end of the second structural section to the flexible section;

whereby the structural sections are fabricated from a material that has less [“give” than] or no elasticity in comparison to the material from which the flexible section is made.

Claim 20 (canceled and replaced with new claims 20 and 21)